



## Intriguing Phenomena Demonstrated in Tucson

by David H. Howard

While the physical phenomena of mediumship may be less evident nowadays, it still exists; and, just as before, it continues to thrill and mystify. Along with my wife, Georgetta, I have had the opportunity to witness some amazing physical mediumship, most recently on February 28, in Tucson, Arizona. The medium was Hoyt Z. Robinette of Camp Chesterfield, a Spiritualist community in Indiana.

Robinette, who has a master's degree in clinical psychology, relays messages from spirit while rendering drawings of spirits and related spirit scenes. Now in his mid-60s, he has been a professional medium for more than 35 years, sharing his gift with circles across the U.S. and in several foreign countries.

The February sitting was not the first time Georgetta and I witnessed Robinette's work. We had several sittings with him in 2010, when he visited Glendale, Arizona, near our winter home in the Phoenix area. The first of those sittings involved a circle of around 25 people at the Church of the Living Spirit. Upon entering the church we were each handed a quarter-sheet paper (called a billet) with instructions to write down complete names of family or friends who were in spirit; write a question to be answered by spirit; and sign our complete name at the bottom. These slips were completed and folded once by each of us and eventually collected randomly in a basket by the minister of the church. They were in full view for the complete evening and were not given to the medium until after he was blindfolded, as explained below.

Robinette proceeded to explain to the group the process for the spirit paintings. He had a tightly-woven wicker basket (with a lid) like those hand made in Mexico to be used for serving rolls or hot tortillas. He took everything out and showed us the empty interior. Since it was thin and woven from reeds there could be no "secret compartment," as later examination proved. After showing us the basket he had a member of the circle open a brand new pack of plain, blank 3x5 cards. She pulled off the shrink wrap and fanned the cards to ascertain that nothing appeared on any of them (and we were each witness to this). He then picked up big bunches of assorted colored pens and markers that had previously been in the basket, each with its cap in place.

These were tossed back into the basket a handful at a time with about a quarter or fifth of the cards thrown in between layers of pens. He continued to do this until the basket became entirely full and the lid was placed on it.

Robinette shared his understanding that spirits have the ability to exercise their will power to extract ink from the pens and transfer it to the cards. Often the pens become empty, he said, indicating that the ink from the pens is actually used. Before each session he tests all the pens to make sure they are useable.

After Robinette's explanation the full basket was then positioned on a small table in front of the lectern where it remained untouched and in full view until it was opened at the end of the evening. Next he applied several strips of adhesive tape to each eye so as to diminish the possibility of peeking out. A blindfold over his bandaged eyes further decreased the prospect of seeing. In the unlikely chance that he could see around all this it was not evident to those of us present because most of the time the billets were held out of visual range. Even someone without a blindfold would have been unable to read them most of the time.

The church's minister next handed Robinette the basket containing the billets which he proceeded to unfold and hold altogether in his hand while pacing back and forth behind the lectern, seemingly in a somewhat altered state. The billets remained in his hands in a bunch, usually at waist level, many of them undoubtedly upside down. For the next



*Spirit painting of  
Dr. Sara Rink*

See PHENOMENA page 2

## PHENOMENA

*From page 1*

hour or so he called out one-by-one first names, in most cases, of those of us in the circle. Sometimes, though, he gave a last name and at other times he made contact with one of us by first speaking the name of one of our deceased friends or loved ones. Each person in the circle was spoken to at length and from the verbal acknowledgements it was obvious the other people's information was as accurate and revealing as was ours. (This was later confirmed by me in conversations with several participants.)

I was alerted that it was my turn to hear from the medium when he said, "Does someone here recognize 'Prince'?" I had written that name at the top of my billet – "Prince" is the nickname given to my lifelong spiritual teacher/mentor A.K. Mozumdar. I acknowledged my recognition of the name and Robinette continued by saying others in spirit were present with me that evening. He then went on to correctly give the names of all three of the persons I had written on my billet.

I was called "David" by the medium even though I had written "Dave" on the billet. Neither Georgetta nor I had ever met or seen him before and had not been introduced on this evening.

The medium continued by naming several of my spirit guides who were present as well, names I did not recognize – one being a Sara Rink, M.D., whose image would appear on my 3x5 card. This list of names was in answer to my written question, "Who are my guides and others in spirit who are helping me?" So far we have been unable to locate a record for a Dr. Sara Rink but in our own circle the following year I asked the spirit control of one of our mediums if "Dr. Rink" was present. The answer was that yes, "he" was. When I questioned further about the gender we were told that Sara was unavailable at that time but that Dr. Charles Rink was there. An Internet search has confirmed a Dr. Charles Rink practicing in Pennsylvania at the turn of the twentieth century.

When it was Georgetta's turn the medium summoned her attention by calling out the name "George," who was her father (one of the names on her billet). He then asked, "Is your name Georgette or Georgetta?" Three other names were spoken that matched those written on her billet. Her spirit guide named by Robinette was a Dr. Ballinger who would be pictured on the card. The name meant nothing to her but the picture on the card resembled an indi-



*Robinette*

vidual she remembers from many dreams.

When the billet reading was complete, the medium removed the blindfold and tape, then opened the basket and pulled out all the 3x5 cards. Many were still blank but those that were painted rested near the top of the basket. There was one for each person in the circle. On the back of each card was the name of the individual in the circle for whom the card was created as well as the name of the person pictured on the reverse plus names of other spirit guides. When holding the paintings up to the light several other small facial images become visible, almost like watermarks. These do not show up in a scan.

As remarkable as this was, it was not overwhelmingly evidential to us because the pictures and all of the names were either unknown to us or those we had written on our billets. Speed forward five years, however, and our recent experience with Robinette's billet reading and cards turned out a hundred times better.

During that sitting, at a private Tucson residence, the number of participants was about the same and the group also included two close friends of ours. Seating was crowded and I found myself positioned about six feet from Robinette, while one friend was directly next to him as was my wife; we could each see into the basket, tray and everything where the medium was working. We observed no switches nor any indication of fraud of any kind; furthermore, the outcome confirms that such shenanigans could not possibly produce the results we experienced. The session was conducted in the same manner as we observed in 2010 – in full light, I should add.

When Robinette came to me for my "reading" he acknowledged three names of those in spirit that I'd written on my billet – John Stumph (a paternal great-grandfather), Byron Klaue (a personal friend who has come through in our own circle) and Madge Bond, a maternal aunt who also pops into our own circle from time to time. Then came an unanticipated shocker – he spoke the full name of my best friend in college, Eric Poole (who was not listed on my billet nor was he on my mind), who died about 15 years ago. Robinette then made some very appropriate comments about a book I'm in the middle of writing about Spiritualism. On my billet I had written, "Is the book going in the right direction?" and Robinette's immediate question to me was, "Are you writing something?" He proceeded to give a general outline of what I was to write which corresponded closely to what I had already formulated. Nobody in the room, not even my wife, was aware of these details.

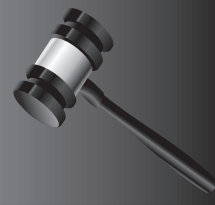
After the session my card came out of the bas-

*See CARD page 9*





## President's Message: Understanding Energy Fields



Recently, I received a copy of an undated article from Rev. Dick Batzler, Ph.D., a former president of ASCS and esteemed author, entitled *Paraelectricity, A Primary Energy*, by Robert N. Miller. The main point of this research report is that energy is generated by both humans and magnets and this energy doesn't register on thermometers, radio meters or other standard sensors.

This report showed brain wave patterns that were traced onto paper and a "Tensionmeter" that was used to measure surface tension of water simultaneously. The healer being tested held the end of two stainless steel rods in each hand and immersed the other ends of the rods in distilled water for exactly three minutes. The difference between the surface tension readings obtained before and after the treatment was a measure of the energy transferred from the test subject (a healer) to the water.

The energy from a healer's hands was called "paraelectricity" because it acts like electricity in flowing from a high potential source to a person or object at a lower potential. The healer didn't knowingly do anything. When a healer placed his or her hands on a person, the energy was received.

This report was a nice "piece" of information that is helping me in trying to understand how this electrical vibration and energy that we sometimes call "God" creates spiritual experiences and mediumship. This primary energy that's emitted from a healer's hands or from magnets is different from heat, light or electricity. The alpha state is the most effective state that was found for this mental healing. This is the state we are in just before we fall asleep.

I've had the pleasure recently of sharing emails with one of our other members, Richard Borutta. Richard is a retired electrical engineer who worked for Bell Labs for 30 years and was awarded five patents. He then worked for Lucent until 2011. He explains that he understands this material largely due to having had a near-death experience.

Richard further explains that his theory is that the uniting or merging energy from the Collective Unconscious interacts with the positive electrical energy in our cells. This process produces an electrical charge that stresses the "coalescing field" (Richard's term) which produces a little push back to maintain equilibrium. He said to think of when you poke a balloon and it bulges out around where you poke it.

Living organisms sustain their existence by supporting stable patterns of energy throughout their bodies and lives. We need only to ingest food (fuel) a few times a day to sustain us. If we were like machines we'd need to consume fuel constantly.

This reaction creates a continuous oscillation of energy throughout the organs of our body (See p. 13 of *The Searchlight*, April 2015) to view the shapes of vibrational energy that flow between us and in our bodies. It's these patterns of energy that develop in the body/organs/brain that are the basis of our thoughts, emotions and other functions such as a heartbeat, etc. In a way, the neurons firing are the power sources that sustain the overall patterns we subjectively identify as our mind.

Our mind is the boundary between our consciousness and unconsciousness states. We can give direction to the unconscious mind without having our thoughts screened or distorted by our conscious mind.

All living things are connected through this "coalescing" or merging and uniting collective unconscious "field." This field sustains the space-time we experience in life but contains within it the record of all events that have merged throughout all time and space.

When you get a thought that seems to come out of nowhere but is connected with something else that transcends time and space it's because you tapped into this "field." Maybe your thought pattern matched the one in the field briefly and the response manifested as a result. Richard said if I were interested in a more formal explanation, he could put something together. But, no, this is just fine. Thanks so much Richard!

I had another "energy" experience by meeting our secretary Kathy De Vito near her home in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania recently. Kathy is a retired teacher and is in transition deciding how to use her artistic, musical and spiritual gifts to develop a new career as a healer. She told me a story about her experience years ago sitting in a "development circle." Everyone held hands and people were getting spiritual information.

Kathy was frustrated because she wasn't receiving any information and all the other people in the group were channeling information. However, when Kathy stopped holding hands in the circle, the other people stopped receiving their information. They eventually figured out that she was their "battery" and without her holding of their hands no information was forthcoming. As time passed, Kathy was able to intuit beneficial information while giving clients energy treatments.

I very much enjoy receiving this energy knowledge from our members!

— Karen E. Herrick, Ph.D.  
karen@karenherrick.com



## Searchlight Media Watch

Tom and Lisa Butler, NST

**Crisis is an Opportunity:** Dr. Elisabet Sahtouris says that our scientific models of nature have become our cultural creation stories, telling us through physics that we live in an accidental, non-living universe in entropic decline and through biology that we are doomed to an endless Darwinian struggle in scarcity. Sahtouris, an evolution biologist and futurist, presents us with an updated scientific model of nature. Showing us instead a living, self-organizing universe in dynamic balance and an evolutionary process in which hostile competition gives way to mature collaboration—a view that encourages people everywhere to express their unique talents through contributions to peaceful cooperation, both local and global. In this view it is clear that the globalisation of humanity is a natural, biological, evolutionary process away from exploitation and toward global family. Revealing Nature's own secrets of success permits us to see clearly how to overcome current obstacles to achieving these ends, thus showing the way to a possible future in which humanity and other species thrive in cooperative ecological sustainability despite severe climate changes.

From: "Crisis is Opportunity: The Evolution of Humanity from Competition to Cooperation Living Better on a Hotter Planet," Lifeweb, sahtouris.com/pdfs/A2011Flyer.pdf

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**Studying the Brain:** "At the present time, there are two main approaches to studying the human brain. The clinical neurologist is intent on mapping the functions, on identifying which area of the brain carries out each function and tracing the major connections between them. The academic parapsychologist acts on the assumption that the brain is a calculating machine and tries to understand the 'programs' underlying those calculations. Each assumes that any brain function must ultimately be explainable in terms of the laws of physics, accepted or new. In the latter case [it] seems to be tacitly assumed that any discoveries will only require an



Sahtouris

addition to present knowledge, not requiring revision or alteration of the current canon. I disagree, and am convinced that it is possible (in fact in my opinion, highly probable) that the cause(s) of most 'paranormal' phenomena will ultimately be traced to a serious error or omission in the fundamental assumptions on which science is based."

From: "Blue Sky Thinking - Part One: Spiritualism and Religion" by John D. Ralphs *Paranormal Review* Issue 67, Society for Psychical Research, spr.ac.uk. *A Venture in Immortality*, by D. Kennedy, Gerrards Cross, Colin Smythe, 1973

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**Quiet Time:** Several San Francisco middle and high schools are using a stress reduction strategy called "Quiet Time." Twice daily, a gong sounds in the classroom and students shut their eyes and try to clear their minds. An impressive array of studies shows that integrating meditation into a school's daily routine can markedly improve the lives of students.

In the first school where it was tried, students are doing light-years better. In the first year the number of suspensions fell by forty-five percent. Within four years, the suspension rate was among the lowest in the city. Daily attendance rates climbed to ninety-eight percent, well above the citywide average, and grade point averages improved markedly.

On the California Achievement Test, twice as many students in Quiet Time schools have become proficient in English, compared with students in similar schools where the program doesn't exist, and the gap is even bigger in math. Teachers report that students are less emotionally exhausted and more resilient.

From: "Meditation transforms roughest San Francisco schools," by David L. Kirp, SFGate, 2014, sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/Meditation-transforms-roughest-San-Francisco-5136942.php

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**Tradition and Modern Knowledge:** "The con-



flict between tradition and modern knowledge has led to devious and contradictory behavior in which pulpit pronouncements disagree with 'head-office instructions.' The Rev. David Kennedy discusses in his book (Kennedy, 1973) how, as long ago as the 1920s, a very learned committee appointed by the Church of Scotland reported, among other things, that:

The Church cannot dismiss these phenomena [i.e., spirit communication] with indifference.... Ministers may even encounter genuine phenomena in the course of their duties.... There is room in the larger life of the Church for Christian Spiritualists whose special experiences have been sufficient to convince them.

Similarly, he quotes the majority report of the Church of England's Committee of Enquiry in the late 1930s which stated:

We think that it is probable that the hypothesis that they [i.e., messages received by mediums] proceed in some cases from discarnate spirits is the true one.

However, it is significant that the latter report, although commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury and taking three years to compile, was resolutely 'pigeonholed' by his successor (Cosmo Lang) who flatly refused to have it discussed, despite howls of protest from Spiritualists who had cooperated in its compilation. It was quietly issued without discussion some thirty years later."

From: "Blue Sky Thinking - Part Four: Spiritualism and Religion" by John D. Ralphs *Paranormal Review* Issue 67, Society for Psychical Research, spr.ac.uk. *A Venture in Immortality*, by D. Kennedy, Gerrards Cross, Colin Smythe, 1973

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### Backwards-in-time Effect on the Present:

"Studies using recording of autonomic nervous response and/or EEG recordings on brainwaves have shown changes indicating increased subconscious anticipation of a forthcoming strongly emotive visual image or sensory shock occurring some five seconds after a preset signal. For computer images the screen remained blank until an emotionally neutral image such as grass, or emotionally charged image such as violence . . . was shown. For studies using sensory shock there was either a shock or a non-shock stimulus after five seconds. Sometimes the anticipatory onset commenced even before the computer had executed its random choice of emotive versus neutral stimuli. These stud-



ies imply that a future event-to-be experienced, but not yet chosen, can have a backwards-in-time effect on the existent present."

From: "After Dr. Mayer Said 'This Changes Everything,' What Happen Next? Part Two" by Robert A. Charman, *Paranormal Review*, Issue 63, Society for Psychical Research, spr.ac.uk.

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**Psychical Research:** "The rebranding of psychical research as parapsychology did not alter the negative assessment of the subject by mainstream science. In response there have been constant efforts to yoke aspects of psychical research to new scientific findings in order to legitimize the former and until recently these efforts focused on theoretical linkages. Recently, however, there has been a shift in emphasis towards practical aspects of the relationship . . . and this shift in emphasis has opened up new avenues of investigation. Meanwhile, psychical research itself still struggles for recognition among mainstream scientists because it is perceived not to use the methods of science."

From: "Study Day No 65: Historical Aspects of Psychical Research and Its Links with Established Science" by Tom Ruffles, *Paranormal Review*, Issue 67, Society for Psychical Research, spr.ac.uk.

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**Intuition** is a process that gives us the ability to know something directly without analytic reasoning, bridging the gap between the conscious and nonconscious parts of our mind, and also between instinct and reason. **Albert Einstein said**, "The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the mind."

From: "The Intuitive Compass: What Is Intuition, And How Do We Use It?" by Francis P. Cholle, *Psychology Today*, [psychologytoday.com/blog/the-intuitive-compass/201108/what-is-intuition-and-how-do-we-use-it](http://psychologytoday.com/blog/the-intuitive-compass/201108/what-is-intuition-and-how-do-we-use-it).

## New Book Review Editor

Donna Cox Baker of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, has accepted the role of Book Review Editor for the Academy. Baker has a Ph.D. in history, with a focus on afterlife beliefs in the literate antebellum South. She serves as editor-in-chief of a state history magazine, *Alabama Heritage*, and acquires history titles for the University of Alabama Press. She has been a student of *A Course in Miracles* for 23 years and a member of the Academy since 2009.



Paranormal Back Pages (Part II)

## Exploring Oracles with Frederic Myers

by Rick Darby

*William Faulkner famously said, “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.” If only that were true concerning the research, accounts of personal experience, and theories about psychical phenomena! Unfortunately, most such books and articles have a brief shelf life. Some still deserve our attention. This series offers brief discussions of works about paranormal mental phenomena that have fallen into obscurity.*

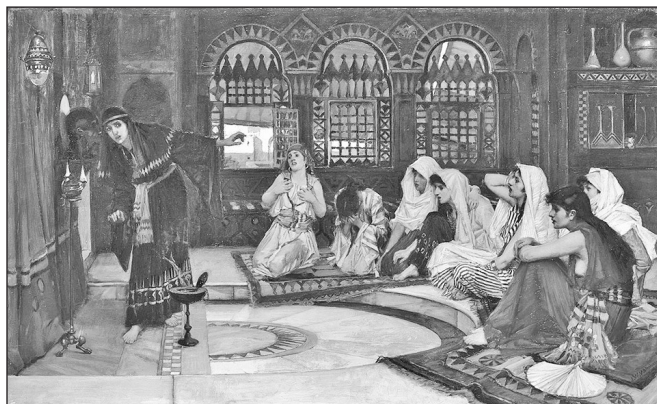
Most people familiar with Frederic Myers’s contribution to establishing scientific psychical research are vaguely aware that he was a classical scholar, lecturing at Cambridge University. His *Essays — Classical* (1883, about the time he co-founded the Society for Psychical Research) includes a long essay on “Greek Oracles.” It’s no surprise that Myers’s study of oracles showed some crossover from his disciplined approach to spiritualist phenomena.

Oracles were special locations where it was believed that gods or spirits could communicate, usually by answering questions, through a human agent. Myers estimates that oracles were consulted roughly from 700 B.C. to A.D. 300, but the practice may have appeared much earlier, in prehistory.

“Greek literature has preserved to us abundant traces of the various causes which led to the ascription of sanctity to some particular locality,” Myers says. “Oftenest it is some chasm or cleft in the ground, filled, perhaps, with mephitic vapours, or with the mist of a subterranean stream, or merely opening in its dark obscurity an inlet into the mysteries of the underworld.” Oracles might be found at “groves and streams and mountain-summits, which in every region of the world have seemed to bring the unseen close to man by waving mystery, or by rushing murmur, or by nearness to the height of heaven.”

Oracular phenomena went through many stages of development. Some early formats are apt to strike us as superstition. For instance, that “words spoken at some critical and culminant, or even at some arbitrarily-chosen moment, have a divine significance.” A chance word could be a key to the future. Myers notes that “this casual method of learning the will of heaven was systematised into a practice at certain oracular temples, where the applicant made his sacrifice, stopped his ears, went into the marketplace, and accepted the first words he happened to hear as a divine intimation.”

Another popular style of oracular transmission was dreams, which it was believed could show



*Consulting the Oracle* by John Waterhouse

what was written on the pages of time to come. Discerning the hidden meaning of dreams was almost as popular in long-ago Greece and Rome as it is today in Freudian, Jungian, and other depth psychology, as well as “New Age” self-help books. And of course dreams have been much studied in modern times for their delivery of clairvoyant, telepathic, and precognitive data.

The next step, Myers says, “takes us to the most celebrated class of oracles, — those in which the prophetess, or more rarely the prophet, gives vent in agitated trance to the words which she is inspired to utter.” He adds in a footnote, “The expressions used about the Pythia [the medium at the Delphic oracle, spoken of by Socrates as recorded by Plato, among many others] vary from this conception of mere *clairaudience* to the idea of an absolute *possession*, which for the time holds the individuality of the prophetess entirely in abeyance.” This variety of interpretations suggests that the ancients were as puzzled as we in our age are about mediumship.

The spirits of this class of oracles were more likely to be of gods than of mortals. The afterlife of humans, even those glorified for their deeds in the Trojan War, was unimpressive. Odysseus encountered blood-drinking, half-alive mopes in his visit to Hades. “Human thought has not yet reached a point at which spirit could be conceived of as more than the shadow of matter,” Myers says.

He takes us to visit the most celebrated oracles of ancient days. “The oracle of Zeus at Dodona takes the highest place among all the oracles which answered by signs rather than inspired speech.” Probably the earliest of which we still know, it is mentioned by Homer. In the *Odyssey* and in Hesiod, Dodona “is spoken of as having its seat among the leaves, or in the hollow or base of an oak, and this

is the idea which prevailed in classical times.”

Myers describes the most famous of all oracles, at Delphi, where “the maddening vapour, which was supposed to rise from the chasm [and intoxicate the prophetess], belongs to nymph-inspiration rather than to the inspiration of Apollo.”

But Apollo inherited the site and was said to speak through it for many generations.

Delphi figures in the famous stories of Croesus, King of Lydia. He tested various oracles in a relatively scientific spirit for those times and found the Apolline to be the most accurate. Croesus asked the oracle whether he should go to war against Persia. With the ambiguity for which oracles became renowned, Apollo replied that if Croesus made war against the Persians he would destroy a great empire, and so he did — his own.



*Priestess of Delphi*  
by John Collier

Myers is skeptical about these accounts. He says, “The only intelligence to which he [Apollo] or his priestess could, on any hypothesis, fairly lay claim, would be of the kind commonly described as ‘second-sight,’ a problem with which ethnologists have already to deal all over the world.”

While the traditional oracles continued to function throughout late antiquity, they increasingly had to share the stage with newly imported religions. Myers says, “In that upheaval of the human spirit which bore to the surface so much of falsehood and so much of truth, — the religion of Mithra, the religion of Serapis, the religion of Christ, — questions are asked from whatever source, glimpses are sought through whatsoever in nature has been deemed transparent to the influences of an encompassing Power.”

Epicureans, Cynics, and Christians were unenthusiastic about or hostile to oracles. As Christianity won converts and eventually replaced paganism as the Roman Empire’s official religion, the prestige of oracles dwindled and seemed destined to die out.

Yet, oracles perceived as a source of truth received one final revival in the growing influence of the mystical philosophy of Neoplatonism.

Myers goes into considerable detail about the beliefs of Porphyry, its greatest spokesman. “In the Neoplatonic view, [controlling] spirits entered by a process of ‘introduction’ into a material body temporarily prepared for them,” he says. “Those spirits who had already been accustomed to appear were best instructed as to how to appear again; but some of them were inclined to mischief, especially if the persons present showed a careless temper.” This almost suggests the struggle to understand the nature of séance mediumship in Myers’s circle.

In the end, Christianity won out. The emperor Theodosius closed the Delphic site and ended oracular pronouncements, if any were still being given, in A.D. 394.

But was that really the last word? Oracles continue to capture the imagination of people far and wide, though their nature still fuels controversy — probably because, like all forms of mediumship, they encompassed a spectrum of psychic perception, the subliminal mind, and commerce.

Myers concluded in his essay, as true now as when he wrote it: “There are some minds into which, after all, a doubt may steal, — whether we have so fully explained away the beliefs of the world’s past, whether we can indeed so assuredly define the beliefs of its future, — or whether it may not still befit us to track with fresh feet the ancient mazes, to renew the world-old desire, and to set no despairing limit to the knowledge or the hopes of man.”

## Myers on Dream Oracles

“From these voices [uttering random words believed to have prophetic meaning], which, though clearly audible, are, as it were, unowned and impersonal, we may pass to voices which have a distinct personality, but are heard only by the sleeping ear. Dreams of departed friends are likely to be the first phenomenon which inspires mankind with the idea that they can hold converse with the spiritual world.

“We find dreams at the very threshold of the theology of almost all nations, and accordingly it does not surprise us to find Homer asserting that dreams come from Zeus, or painting, with a pathos which later literature has never surpassed, the strange vividness and agonising insufficiency of these fugitive visions of the night [*Iliad*, chapters I and XXIII...]

“Dream-oracles, or temples where the inquirer slept in the hope of obtaining an answer from the god seen in vision, or from some other vision sent by him, were one of the oldest forms of oracular seats.”



## Meet the Academy's Officers and Directors (Fourth in a Series)

### Karen Herrick: Not Your Garden Variety Therapist

If Karen Herrick, the Academy's president, has a stamp on her desk that reads "OK," instead of "approved," it's because she spent a good part of her youth growing up in Kinderhook, New York, the home of Martin Van Buren, the eighth president of the U.S. Van Buren was known as "Old Kinderhook," which was abbreviated to "O.K." in his campaign slogan, believed to be the origin of the word *Okay*.

But that is not to suggest that Karen, who has been serving as chief executive of the Academy since July 2012, is a "rubber stamp" kind of executive. She's been known to disapprove ideas now and then when she has concluded they are not in the best interest of the Academy. "Yes, the presidency has involved more work than I had anticipated, especially when we held monthly board meetings," Karen responds to a question. "Having a secretary really helps me stay organized, along with the fact that I can type over a hundred words per minute and thereby answer emails quickly." She adds that the biggest benefit is hearing spiritual stories from members, including the various books authored by members.

Born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Karen and her mother lived with her grandmother on a farm in Kinderhook because, as a result of World War II, her father was overseas much of the time. She recalls that Van Buren's home was just up the road from her grandmother's farm. As her father was Protestant and her mother Catholic, there was much strife in her home over religion when her father was home. "I decided early that God really wasn't interested in my family, especially since my father drank and there was constant fighting," Karen muses, mentioning that she attended the Dutch Reformed church in those days.

But there's more to Kinderhook than Van Buren. Washington Irving, the author of *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, also lived there. "Whenever we had thunder and lightning, my grandmother said that we should not be afraid as it was just Rip Van Winkle bowling," Karen recalls with a smile, adding that she graduated from Ichabod Crane High School, after which she attended business college and then worked as a stenographer for the FBI.

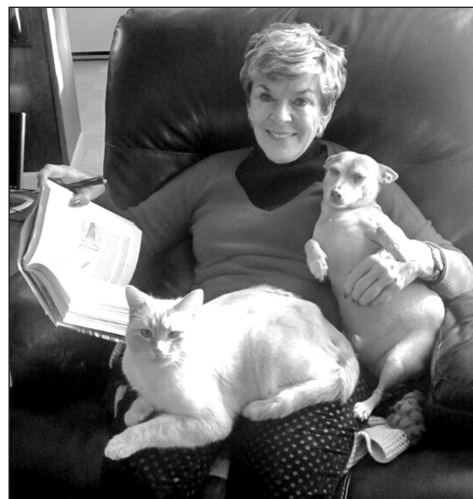
Marriage with her high school sweetheart resulted in two daughters but ended in divorce after 12 years. She then moved from Florida to California and worked as a secretary in the computer industry, remarrying and moving to New Jersey, then giving birth to another daughter. After a second divorce,

Karen began pursuing a college education, graduating *magna cum laude* with a B.A. in art therapy, then receiving a master's degree in social work from Rutgers University and starting the Center of Children of Alcoholics Inc. as a private practice. She received her Ph.D. in 2008 and has continued as a practicing clinical therapist in Red Bank, New Jersey.

Karen is not your garden-variety therapist, however – the kind that avoids discussing spiritual matters. She explains that she learned through Jungian and transpersonal psychology that psychological problems must be understood "as the suffering of the soul that has not yet discovered its meaning, and that healing depends on a deep experience of spirit." She relates how her own problems growing up in dysfunctional family and then with two failed marriage motivated her to specialize in dysfunctional families, alcoholism, sexual abuse, eating disorders, grief, dissociation and spirituality issues. Her first book, *You're Not Finished Yet*, published in 2007, deals with alcoholism – its causes, how it affects family members, and its stages of recovery, the final stage being the genesis stage, a spiritual stage, in which one learns to transcend past traumas.

"My fundamental belief system is to *know* there is a Higher Power or universal intelligence that is responsible for this world and some parts of our lives," she offers. "I try to learn from my mistakes and to grow from them. I'm pleased with whom I've become and I look forward to enjoying great grandchildren in the future, traveling more and always learning." Her biggest regret is that Academy members are so distant from each other that it is impossible to meet more often.

Karen is excited about her latest book, *Grandma, What is a Soul?* and looks forward to continuing her efforts to bolster the Academy.



Karen Herrick



## CARD

From page 2

ket along with the others, complete with a beautiful painting of Thomas Jefferson (one of only two in the room with faces of famous people). On the back of the card was Jefferson's name along with mine and several others, none of which was on my billet, on my mind, nor had they been spoken to anyone. There was the late C.A. Brown, a friend who figures prominently in the book I am writing; Annie Howard, my paternal grandmother; Eric Poole again; Vera Howard, my mother; and a familiar-sounding name that baffled me for an hour – Nancy Bassett. In the car on the way back to Phoenix that night, Georgetta and I were talking about our cards when suddenly it dawned on me who this Nancy was – a maternal great-grandmother. Upon seeing the name I didn't recognize it immediately because in my genealogy records I have always referred to her by her maiden name (Nancy Irwin) or her last married name (Nancy Warmoth). But in between these was her first married name (Burchell, ending in a divorce in 1869) and then Nancy Bassett (Mr. Bassett passed away in the 1880s after they moved out to Oregon). I found the appearance of that name to be highly evidential.

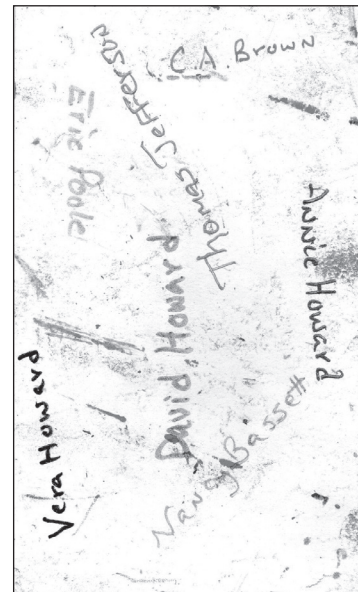
On the back of Georgetta's card were names like mine. Several were those of deceased loved ones she had written on her billet but others, not listed on the billet, showed up as well. Among those was the late Esperanza Cooper, a sister-in-law (full name, spelled correctly); Alice Ware, her maternal grandmother; and Pat Keen, a deceased friend from Oregon. Nobody in the room knew these names, least of all Hoyt Robinette. Coincidentally, Dr. Ballinger's name appeared on the back of her card; he was the one pictured on Georgetta's card five years previous but he had not been listed on the billet.

I've read a lot of articles over the years trying to explain why mediums decades ago often received spirit names but in later years names seemed to be so elusive. Name dropping certainly is not in short supply in a Robinette circle and in our personal spiritualist circle we often get first names and occasionally a last name. For example, the first time Byron Klaue (mentioned above) came to our circle the medium got the first name right then said the "last name sounds like 'cloud'" which is absolutely correct – the name being pronounced "cloud" without the "d." Then the medium clairvoyantly saw Byron with prominent horn-rimmed glasses which he was putting on and taking off repeatedly. The truth is, unknown to the medium, Byron never wore glasses in life but was, instead, blind. I could not think of a better way to draw attention to this identifying disability! Finally, he then showed the medium a washing machine – which I explained was a perfect identifier because Byron owned for many

years several appliance stores which sold thousands of washing machines.

While none of these instances occurred under controlled laboratory conditions, the information transmitted is identified by those in the circle and, more important, it creates a positive emotional response that gives the listener convincing personal evidence that life does continue after death. Critics can point at one thing after another but in the final analysis it is in the response of the one receiving the message where the proof resides. Was the message, the name, the description accurate, relevant and meaningful? Was the given information inaccessible to the medium? In our case, the evidential results obtained in the card painting sessions put all doubts to rest.

*Dave Howard is a retired journalist who splits his time between Oregon and Arizona. Check out his blog at <http://spiritcommunion.blogspot.com/>*



Spirit painting card

## Ponder on This

"In short, atheism-materialism, springing forth from a distorted interpretation of the contents of the scientific revolution, made man a hapless object of the blind forces of evolution, brought into existence with no reason or purpose, and subject to annihilation upon death. We humans are machines, explainable by physical understanding of matter, i.e., in terms of local interactions among atoms and molecules, and in strict accordance with mechanical laws. A dim view of life, indeed, leading straight to nihilism and – as a reaction – aimless material hedonism.

"The facts of life unquestionably prove that this pervasive worldview has not improved mankind's lot: the western way of life has not liberated mankind, rather it has imprisoned it in a grim, despondent present. Nihilism pervades society and along with hoarding of material goods killed spirituality."

– Sergio Canavero, M.D.  
"Immortal" 2014

# Our Book Horizon



It has been a pleasure these past few months to take up the work of editing book reviews for the ASCS. This role offers me the chance to serve the organization that has served me for years, to meet ASCS members, and to wallow in great books. I plan to use this regular *Searchlight* column to talk about recently or soon-to-be published books addressing our mission. I will be looking also at publishing trends of interest.

I had no idea how many books are appearing in our subject areas until this new role required me to search publishing venues for what is on the horizon. Many dozens of new titles are appearing between each issue of *Searchlight*—more than we can ever review in available print space. We will be announcing books almost daily, though, on ASCS's online Book Review & Discussion forum (details on page 14). It would be particularly valuable if our ASCS members who have published books will visit this forum and talk with us about their experiences (as some have already started to do). Please take advantage of this resource and opportunity to talk with fellow ASCS members about the keys to spiritual understanding found in books.

As I write this, it is early April, and I am talking about books scheduled for release in May and June—so some might be delayed. If all goes as planned, however, our field is trending toward books about mystical spirituality and experiences. Among them is Roger L. Welsch's *The Reluctant Pilgrim: A Skeptic's Journey into Native Mysteries* (Bison Books, 5/1/15). It tells the story of a man's departure from his Lutheran upbringing to a faith in the legends and practices of the Omaha and Pawnee tribes, who had become his adopted family. *The Hidden Teaching beyond Yoga: The Path to Self-Realization and Philosophic Insight, Volume 1*, written by Paul Brunton and published posthumously, shares the Hindu Vedanta and Buddhist wisdom he acquired in the 1930s, while traveling in Asia.

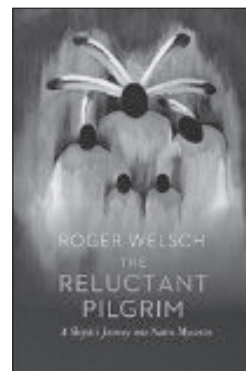
Also trending high are books on spiritual practice and consciousness. Not exactly new, but *renewed*, is the 50<sup>th</sup> edition (!) of Hugh Lynn Cayce's *Venturing Inward: Safe and Unsafe Ways to Explore the Unconscious Mind* (A.R.E. Press, 5/1/15), having been in continuous print and revision since 1966. Steve Taylor and Eckhart Tolle's *The Calm Center: Reflections and Meditations for Spiritual Awakening* (New World Library, 5/12/15) uses meditations and poems to counter modern-day stress and facilitate a healing spiritual awareness. In *The Five Levels of*

*Attachment: Toltec Wisdom for the Modern World* (Hierophant Publishing, 6/1/15), Don Miguel Ruiz Jr. takes up where his father left off in the 1997 *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom*. He explores how we, to our detriment, become attached to the world and belief systems. Sam Harris has revised his *Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality without Religion* (Simon & Schuster, 6/16/15). The book's description declares: "*Waking Up* is for the twenty percent of Americans who follow no religion but who suspect that important truths can be found in the experiences of such figures as Jesus, the Buddha, Lao Tzu, Rumi, and the other saints and sages of history."

In the areas of premonitions, predictions, and spirit communication, Brynne Larson has written *The Dark Side of the Supernatural: Every Path Leads Somewhere...* (Destiny Image, 6/16/15). Larson, an exorcist, writes, "You were created to experience the supernatural. The secret is learning how to avoid the dark side." Our own Dr. Raymond Moody has written the foreword to *The Afterlife Healing Circle: How Anyone Can Contact the Other Side* (New Page Books, 6/22/15), by Candace Talmadge and Jana Simons. The authors dispel myths about séances, which they call "afterlife healing circles," and offer guidance on avoiding potential dangers as one seeks contact with departed loved ones or children not yet born. Another Paul Brunton title, *Realizing Soul: From Intuition to an Inspired Life* (Larson Publications, 6/7/2015), is described as being "about connecting with—and staying connected with—that intangible (yet undeniable) 'something more' that makes struggles worthwhile when it's there, and successes hollow when it's not."

These, along with books reviewed in this issue of *Searchlight*, are just a handful of the many new and upcoming books I could describe. As I plan for the August issue, I would love to give attention to books written by our own members recently. I also will be giving our own writers the spotlight on our Book Reviews & Discussions group online, when I am aware of them. Please do let me know if there are titles that deserve attention.

— Donna Cox Baker, Ph.D.  
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## Book Reviews

**Healing Stories: My Journey from Mainstream Psychiatry toward Spiritual Healing**, by Robert W. Alcorn, M.D., Perception Garden Press, Medina, Ohio, 2011, 133 pp.

This book is partly autobiography, partly case study collection, and partly theoretical treatise. The author, a practicing psychiatrist in the Cleveland area who prescribes medication for most of his troubled clients, has his heart in another place. He is a shaman, and for those few clients who let him, he uses shamanistic techniques to bring about healing, including depossession.

In the book's early chapters, he tells the story of his falling out with traditional psychiatry. He writes, "I felt that, even though some of the new medicines could work quickly and safely, medication did nothing for their sense of self, or the need for meaning in their lives." Influenced by innovative teachers like Sandra Ingerman, he developed a different approach to healing the sick psyche—what he terms spiritual healing through soul retrieval. This is "a way of restoring soul essence to a person who has lost part of himself as a result of the effects of a traumatic event or series of events."

Alcorn's worldview makes room for earthbound spirits, and he believes that far too often they, and not a chemical imbalance in the brain, are the real cause of mental illness in his clients. Attracted to the vacuum left in the soul by the loss of "soul essence," these spirits, who wander about the countryside following death "trying to figure out what to do," enter the vacuum as a kind of safe harbor. Alcorn believes that compassionately helping the invading spirit leave this vacuum and enter into the light of the next world is the key to his client's recovery. He calls it a double healing: heal the spirit by showing him how to depart, and his client will heal as a result. You might call it depossession without fanfare.

In Alcorn's very interesting discussion of "chemical imbalance," he argues that psychiatrists make this diagnosis from the misconception that it scientifically explains mental illness. In fact, a diagnosis based solely on the behavior of his patient belies this. The more one digs into the ultimate cause of the illness, the more clearly it appears that the cause is nonphysical. Brain MRIs on patients with bipolar disorder are frequently indistinguishable from those of healthy brains.

Physiology therefore rarely explains the cause of mental illness. Other factors, ranging from exposure to traumatic events to spirit possession, are often the calling card for the spirit desiring to attach himself to the unsuspecting victim. Upon attachment, needless to say, the ensuing internal confusion displays as mental illness. When a schizophrenic claims to hear voices that are alien to him, in Alcorn's view he probably understands what is really going on far better than the typical therapist.

At best, the powerful anti-psychotic drugs prescribed to control patients work for only one reason: throughout the body and brain, they create an uncomfortable environment for spirits who would otherwise take over. Either way, by drugs or by possession, the victim is dehumanized. Alcorn describes the condition of the patient, who is completely unaware that his suffering is caused by an attached spirit: "The spirits who are attached pull them this way and that, throw them into a panic, destabilize their mood regulation, drain their energies, cloud their awareness and leave them searching for answers in the dark." Alcorn's objective is to rehumanize his patients through "compassionate depossession."

The last portion of the book describes the various kinds of pestering spirits and how to disarm their control. His technique eventually removes the spirit by inducing in the patient an "altered state of perception" and filling both patient and spirit "with divine love and grace." When all goes well, the profound experience of depossession takes the patient into "the World of Light," often seeing the suffering being who inhabited their energy field.

The book closes with advice to the reader "for his or her own healing and protection from harm." Visualizing a "golden light of grace above the head" calls healing spirits down to assist us. By doing this meditation on light on a daily basis, Alcorn concludes, "You can begin to introduce a more peaceful quality of energy into your life. You can create an inner vibration that does not permit darker, lower energies to enter. You can become your own healer."

This book deeply affected me, and I have begun meditating on this light "from the highest source." I see a great advantage in Dr. Alcorn's shamanistic view of the world. The so-called scientific paradigm leaves us, by contrast, victims of uncontrollable physical brain structures, treatable with drugs that render us less human. This book should not be missed by those who suspect that earthbound spirits are behind much of what passes these days for mental illness.

— *Stafford Betty*, Ph.D.  
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**7 Reasons to Believe in the Afterlife: A Doctor Reviews The Case for Consciousness after Death**, by Jean Jacques Charbonier, M.D., Inner Traditions, Rochester, VT, 2015, 160 pp.

Jean Jaques Charbonier's book *7 Reasons to Believe in the Afterlife* shows us that near-death experiences (NDEs) are an opportunity to experience death, visit the realm of the dead and return, and sometimes to communicate with the spirits of our loved ones who have passed.

His first "good" reason to believe is that 60 million people have returned from the "so-called" dead and know that life continues after death. According to his latest statistical studies, the 60 million people include 4% of the population of the western hemisphere—among them 12 million Americans and 2.5 million French citizens.

The term used in France is "experience de mort imminente" (EMI) or an "experience of provisional death" (EPD). He explains that these two terms are now outmoded and have been replaced by an "experience of provisional death" (EPD).

Charbonier finds that negative NDEs create a tremendous amount of guilt, because "if others have such a beautiful experience and I have such a terrifying one, I must be a real monster!" He states that these negative experiences need to be integrated by the person who experienced them.

Medical personnel will enjoy his book, as he gives many medical facts—such as, "An EEG flat-lines within fifteen seconds of a cardiac arrest"—and discusses temperatures of bodies, etc. He also states that hypoxia (a lack of oxygen) and hypercapnia (an excess of carbon dioxide) produce fairly typical specific clinical indicators that include slow thinking, irritability, difficulty concentrating and memory issues—in short, behavior that is in sharp contrast with the perception of mental clarity experienced by people undergoing an NDE. With this explanation, he handles skeptics and their questions.

Charbonier has collected 124 accounts of out-of-body experiences (OBEs) that had no connection to NDE situations. The subjects of these experiences had, at least once in their lives, experienced the sensation of spontaneously and involuntarily finding themselves outside of their physical body. About one-third of these people had their OBE provoked by using chemical substances. He states that most OBEs, as with other spiritual experiences (SEs), happen in association with strong emotions.



In his fifth chapter, he discusses what Raymond Moody would call "shared death experiences," which Charbonier calls "perceptions connected to death." He discusses how we all have mediumistic ability, some more than others, and the ones who have "enormous dish antennas towering over their heads are the privileged ones we call mediums."

A French public opinion poll conducted by the Association for Research on Value Systems (AVRAL; *Association pour la recherche sur les systèmes de valeurs*), published in April 2011, showed that 64% of those surveyed think the spirit survives the death of the body. Fifty percent also stated that they believe in reincarnation. (Reviewer's note: In the US, only 24% of people surveyed by American associations believe in reincarnation.) Fifty percent of people in the French opinion poll also believed in communication with the dead. Charbonier describes *NDE magazine*, first published in May 2011, which is being sold in newsstands in France and in other French-speaking countries.

The book ends with an appendix on quantum psychics, where Charbonier says: "The supral web contains, archives and transmits information that is permanently deposited and added to it," which I believe equates to the Akashic records. Every chapter is filled with interesting stories from his clients and those who have experienced NDEs and OBEs.

It is validating for the French people, I'm sure, to have a book written by a renowned medical doctor to add to their understanding of the fields of parapsychology and the psychology of death. For Americans, we now have French or European terms to help explain the world of everyday consciousness and the world of higher consciousness. For this reason, this book should be read by those who have some knowledge of NDEs.

— Rev. Karen E. Herrick, Ph.D.  
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### Third Man Factor

"There is, it seems, a common experience that happens to people who confront life as its extremes, and strange as it may sound, given the cruel hardship they endure to reach that place, it is something wonderful. This radical notion – that an unseen presence has played a role in the success or survival of people who have reached the limits of human endurance – is based on the extraordinary testimony of scores of people who have emerged alive from extreme environments. To a man or woman, they report that at a critical point they were joined by an additional, unexplained friend who lent them the power to overcome the most dire circumstances."

— John Geiger  
(*The Third Man Factor*, Weinstein Books, 2009)



**Other Realities? The Enigma of Franek Kluski's Mediumship** by Zofia Weaver, White Crow Books, Hove, U.K., 2015, 182 pp.

This is an account of the mediumship of a Polish medium who operated under the pseudonym of Franek Kluski in the years 1918 to 1925. His work is little known in the west because it was reported in Polish – much of it by his friend Norbert Okołowicz. Only now, with an author fluent in Polish and who was also editor of the SPR's Journal and Proceedings, can Kluski's story be told. Weaver tells us that "Kluski's mediumship was witnessed by something like 350 people," who included eminent men and women from many walks of life, including Dr. Charles Richet, a professor of physiology and a Nobel Prize winner in medicine, and the French astronomer and psychic investigator Camille Flammarion – psychic researchers well-known in the West. Also present at many séances was Tadeusz Urbański, a Polish professor of chemistry who died in 1985. Kluski never performed publicly as a medium and never profited financially from it. His mediumship was always carried out in small private gatherings. Both his father and his uncle – a Catholic priest – had mediumship qualities. Kluski, whose real name was Teofil Modrzejewski, was married and had two children – a boy and a girl.

Kluski experienced visions from the time he was a small boy. At 16, he fell in love with a girl who subsequently died and hers was one of these visions. At 27, he fought a duel, was shot in the chest and was pronounced dead. There is no account of an out-of-body experience but Kluski survived to the amazement of the surgeon treating him. He earned his living as a poet and as a writer for the theatre. He was a deeply religious man and of uncertain health, varying between periods of vigour and times of emotional and physical fragility. When told in confession to cease his mediumistic activities, he did so immediately. But psychic phenomena seemed to invade his presence even outside séances – knockings on walls and windows of apartments before or after his visit, smells of ozone or the aroma of plants and flowers, flickering electric lights and small lights or other living entities in the air around his body.

Chapter 3, which forms the main part of the book, deals with the formal séances with some details of those who witnessed and subsequently described them and many details of the effects produced: the observers included psychical researchers well-known in the West. In 1920, Kluski underwent rigorous examination under controlled conditions

in the laboratory of French physician Dr. Gustave Geley for a series of séances that produced odours, lights, sounds, apports and human apparitions. These effects are described in detail in this chapter.

A number of experiments were devoted to obtaining paraffin wax moulds of materialized hands. This account is too long to reproduce in a short review so I shall take Geley's description from a book of his own, *Clairvoyance and Materialization*: "The procedure is to set a bowl containing paraffin wax, kept at melting-point by being floated on warm water, near the medium. The materialized 'entity' is asked to plunge a hand, a foot, or even part of a face into the paraffin several times. A closely fitting envelope is thus formed, which sets at once in air or by being dipped into another bowl of cold water. The envelope or 'glove' is then freed by dematerialization of the member. Plaster can be poured at leisure into the glove, thus giving a perfect cast of the hand." On one occasion, Geley and Richet added some blue colouring matter to the paraffin, giving it a bluish tinge. "This was done secretly, to be an absolute proof that the moulds were made on the spot and not brought ready-made into the laboratory by Franek or any other person and passed off on us by legerdemain," Geley explained, pointing out that the operations lasted from one to two minutes. These molds are widely considered to be some of the most objective evidence of spirit life on record.

This chapter also describes the appearance of apparitions by another observer at many séances – F.W. Pawlowski, a professor of aeronautical engineering at the University of Michigan, who commented: "...the most impressive and convincing feature of these apparitions when they came toward us were the eyes and the faces with their lifelike expressions. When questions were addressed to the apparitions the facial expression was always perfectly suited to the answer, while an amiable smile played constantly about their lips."

Chapter 4 explores the significance of the phenomena described in this book – whether in fact they provide enough evidence of the existence of other realities that represent "the real world" of which our environment on Earth is but an illusion. There is also a list of References and an Index.

– Howard A. Jones, Ph.D.  
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*Kluski in trance*

**The Guru-Free Guide to Nada Yoga: Sound Current Meditation for the Rest of Us**, by Bennett Z. Kobb, an E-Book accessible at [www.soundcurrent.info](http://www.soundcurrent.info), 2015, 36 pp.

The purpose behind his writing this concise book, Bennett Kobb states, is to make "Nada Yoga, also known as Shadb Yoga, accessible in a basic version." He emphasizes that the practice of Nada Yoga need not involve expressions of devotion to a guru or the attainment of miracles. Rather his book is meant to assist the practitioner in experiencing "healthful sleep and more fulfilling dreaming."

Kobb states that Nada Yoga "consists of listening very closely to a specific internal sound while focusing the physical attention in a particular direction." He indicates that in order to find the internal sound current you should "listen to the interior sounds on the right side of your head" and that you should concentrate on "the highest and purest sound you can detect." Such sounds, he suggests, include OM and AUM.

He also notes that sounds of "bells, chimes,

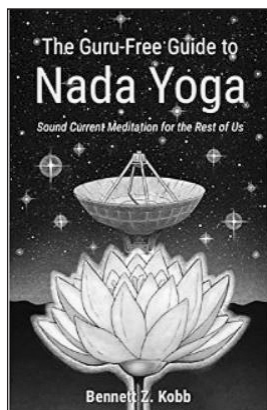
wind or string instruments of extraordinary clarity may be audible." Kobb did not mention that gongs, bowls, singing and chanting are also utilized in Nada Yoga. Nor did he indicate that in some traditions of Nada Yoga a different audible tone is associated with each of the seven chakras.

He also emphasizes that the more traditional rigid postures associated with Nada Yoga are not required and that other more comfortable positions are to be preferred. He also provides many other suggestions for improving the quality of one's Nada Yoga experience.

At the end of his book Kobb provides references to 24 other published commentaries on Nada Yoga.

This e-book could also be characterized as a pamphlet or primer on Nada Yoga. It would appear that the major value of this very brief and well-illustrated booklet is to introduce those who know nothing about Nada Yoga to its basic fundamentals.

— *David Stang*, MTS, JD  
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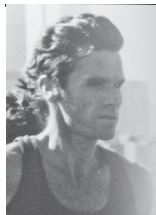
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# Practicing Death



## Editorial: Do “Dead” Celebrities Communicate?

There may very well be more than myth, fable, or allegory connected with the oracles of old, as discussed by Rick Darby on pages 6-7. Those oracles were likely mediums who were receiving guidance from higher beings or “group souls.”

Even though I accept the reality of mediumship, I am always highly skeptical when the spirit communicator claims to be some historical figure. But then when I look at the wisdom imparted by the “entity,” my skepticism erodes somewhat as I find it difficult to believe that such deep knowledge and flowing verbiage is coming from the medium, usually a person of very limited education and average intelligence.

During the early 1850s, Victor Hugo, the renowned French author, was supposedly receiving messages from Socrates, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Martin Luther, and Galileo. One communicating spirit identified “itself” to Hugo as “Death,” another as “Angel of Light.” Initially, Hugo was very skeptical, wondering if the messages were just the thoughts of the sitters coming back to them. Although he soon came to believe that spirits of the dead were communicating, he then wondered if these were “devils in sheep’s clothing,” as religious leaders claimed. But Hugo came to understand that the “essence” of advanced souls can come down through lower spirits and that “group souls” can take on a fictitious identity for want of a specific identity. Whatever the explanation, Hugo was intrigued, impressed, and inspired by much of what the spirits had to say.

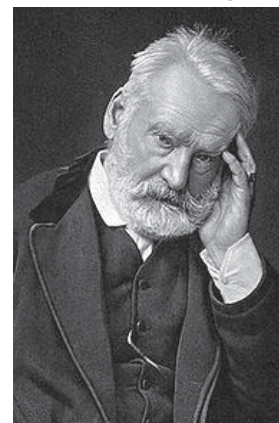
During the 1870s, William Stainton Moses, an Anglican priest, was said to be controlled by a band of 49 spirits under the direction of a spirit called Imperator. Some of Imperator’s subordinates had names like Rector, Mentor, and Doctor. Apparently, Imperator was too far advanced and had to relay messages through some of the 49, who were closer in vibration to the earth vibration. When Imperator was asked about his name and the other strange names in his band of 49, he replied: “These names are but convenient symbols for influences brought to bear upon you. In some cases the influence is not centralized; it is impersonal, as you would say. In many cases the messages given you are not the product of any one mind, but are the collective influence of a number. Many who have been concerned

with you are but the vehicles to you of a yet higher influence which is obliged to reach you in that way. We deliberate, we consult, and in many instances you receive the impression of our united thought.”

Allan Kardec, the pioneering French researcher, purportedly received messages from John the Evangelist, St. Augustine, St. Vincent De Paul, St. Louis, “The Spirit of Truth,” Plato, Fénelon, Franklin, and Swedenborg. They answered questions on every conceivable subject, from God and reincarnation to capital punishment and slavery.

As Kardec came to understand, superior spirits, while preserving their individuality, have no need to be identified with their teachings delivered while on earth, but because humans seem to need an identity in order to fix their ideas, superior spirits who identify with the teachings of the famous personage and belong to the same “family” or “collective whole” may take that famous name to appease us, as it is the teaching, not the signature, that is important. “In proportion as spirits are purified and elevated in the hierarchy, the distinctive characters of their personalities are, in some sort, obliterated in the uniformity of perfection, and yet they do not the less preserve their individuality: this is the case with the superior and pure spirits,” Kardec related what he had been told by the spirits, adding that the name they had on earth “is quite an insignificant thing.”

The superior spirits, Kardec was informed, “have a language always worthy, noble, elevated, with not the least tincture of triviality. They say everything with simplicity and modesty, never boast, never make a parade of their knowledge or their position among others. That of the inferior or ordinary spirit has always some reflex human passion; every expression that savours of vulgarity, self-sufficiency, arrogance, boasting, acrimony, is a characteristic indication of inferiority, or of treachery if the spirit presents himself under a respected and venerated name.”



Victor Hugo

— Michael Tymn



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#### MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of The Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies, Inc. is to discern, develop and disseminate knowledge of how consciousness studies and paranormal phenomena may relate to and enhance the development of the human spirit.

## Mind, Body, Soul Connection

"If all that you read (beginning on page 1) or hear of Hoyt Robinette and the work that he does as a spirit medium sounds too unbelievable, too strange a phenomena to even consider possible, then you have not yet opened yourself up to the miraculous or simply unexpected in life. You have not yet made a true mind, body, soul connection. Not yet made a divine connection with your spiritual support system of angels, guides, and teachers. Not yet come to know, rather than merely hope and pray that the soul of us really is eternal. For it is in divine time that the essence of us sheds its physical vessel of flesh and bone and returns to whence it came. It travels into an afterlife and infinite beyond to where we reunite with a greater power and presence, with friends and loved ones from many lives, and with angels, guides, and teachers that have but our best interest at heart. Who have guided us while in this world and then safely back into another, a world of light, color, and sound, but most of all great wisdom and love.

To know this as a personal truth, I had to experience the miraculous while living in this world. I had to sense beyond the physical or see, hear, and come

to know much more than just the promises of others or even sacred Scripture. I had to peer behind the veil of unbelief and come to validate that my loved ones truly do live on. It was only after receiving a number of spirit images from sessions with Hoyt Robinette that I too was reunited with family members long since departed from this world. Family members whose images had never been published, never made available, and never expected to be seen again until they miraculously appeared through an amazing act of spirit precipitation. So too appeared images of known spirit guides, an angel, and even future grandchildren who looked so much like my daughter and her husband that the validation came of eternal life, life that it is not singular or linear. Life that comes and goes in its own time and way to and fro one world and another in an eternal dance of light, sound, and color.

To all who read or hear of Hoyt Robinette and the work that he does as a spirit medium, I would only suggest keeping an open mind to eventually embrace the miraculous in our world and us.

— *Trinda Latherow*  
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